

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ISLAMABAD 1957

KARACHI 0942, SENT ACTION ISLAMABAD INFO LAHORE, DATED 26 FEB 78,
REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO:

QUOTE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KARACHI 0942

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT PK
SUBJ: PROTEST AGAINST ARREST OF PPP LEADER

1. THERE WAS A HARTAL WITH ACCOMPANYING DISORDERS FEB 23 AT HALA,
THE TOWN NORTH OF HYDERABAD WHERE THE PPP WAS FOUNDED IN 1967.
THE DISTURBANCES WERE IN PROTEST OF THE ARREST OF MAKHDUM
KHALIQUZ ZAMAN, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SIND PPP AND YOUNGER
SON OF MAKHDUM MOHAMMED ZAMAN TALEBUL MAULA, FORMER MNA AND A
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE PAKISTAN PPP. THE SON HAD BEEN ARRESTED FEB
22 UNDER MLO 12 AND JAILED AT KHAIRPUR. THE CHARGE WAS UNSPECIFIC
BUT IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT HE WAS ARRESTED BECAUSE HE ACCOMPANIED
BENAZIR BHUTTO ON HER TOUR OF SIND AND MADE SOME OBJECTIONABLE
SPEECHES.

2. THE DISTURBANCES APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN THE PRODUCT OF BOTH
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RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL INDIGNATION. THE ARRESTEE'S FATHER IS A
KIND OF SECULAR PIR WITH A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS IN
SIND WHO PRESUMABLY REACTED IN ANGER TO THE DETENTION OF A MEMBER
OF THIS FAINTLY SAINTLY FAMILY. THERE SEEMS LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE
REACTION WAS ALSO THAT OF PPP ADHERENTS PROTESTING THE ARREST ON
POLITICAL GROUNDS. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE PROTEST WAS
CENTRALLY DIRECTED BY THE PARTY. THE LOCAL ACTIVISTS SEEM TO

HAVE GONE INTO ACTION ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE.

3. OFFICIAL RELEASES ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE WAS RIOTOUS ACTIVITY IN HALA, FOR WHICH 50 PERSONS WERE DETAINED. SHOPS AND VEHICLES WERE BURNED AND TREES WERE FELLED BLOCKING THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY FOR SOME TIME. THE SINDHI PRESS REPORTS, WITH PICTURES, THAT THE ACTION WAS WIDESPREAD AND THAT IT CONTINUED THROUGH FEB 25 IN AT LEAST SPORADIC FASHION MARKED BY SHOP CLOSINGS AND WORK BOYCOTTS. NEITHER OFFICIAL SOURCES NOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRESS HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED CONTINUING DISORDERS.

4. FURTHERMORE, ONLY THE SINDHI PRESS HAS EXPLICITLY LINKED DISTURBANCES AND SABOTAGE IN OTHER LOCATIONS TO THE HALA PROTEST. THERE WAS A TRAIN DERAILMENT AND A BUND WAS DELIBERATELY BREACHED IN SANGHER DISTRICT, AND THERE WERE SAID ALSO TO BE ACTS OF PROTEST AGAINST THE ARREST OF MAKHDUM KHALIQUZ ZAMAN. THE SINDHI PRESS REPORTS THAT A NUMBER OF VILLAGES IN THE HALA VICINITY JOINED IN THE PROTEST, AND THAT THE POLICE SURROUNDED SOME OF THEM AND RESORTED TO FIRING IN AT LEAST ONE CASE. THE POLICE AND THE ARMY ARE REPORTED TO BE CONDUCTING HEAVY PATROLS IN THE HALA AREA AND IN SANGHER DISTRICT.

MOORE
UNQUOTE
HUMMEL

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